

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Private Bag 18888
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160



Dear Minister Winston Peters,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Organization for World Peace to request that New Zealand take a stronger stance against the Chinese government for its ongoing persecution of the Uighur population of Xinjiang. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs, you will already be aware that the Chinese government has pursued a policy of mass surveillance and unjustified incarceration of more than one million Uighurs and other minority ethnic groups in 're-education camps'. We urge you, as both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Minister, to convince the New Zealand government to take greater action on this matter.

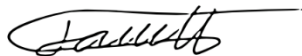
Early in June, the Jamestown Foundation – an American research and analysis institute which focuses on Eurasia – released a report on policies of forced sterilization and mandatory birth- control currently being imposed on the Uighur people. The findings of this report demonstrate an awful reality: the Chinese government is pursuing a policy of genocide against the Uighur people. Government documents reveal plans for mass sterilization via tubal ligation surgery, dating back to 2019. Natural population growth in Uighur prefectures has declined significantly, with an up to 84% decline in some regions. Any who try to avoid these stringent birth control policies are punished by internment in the 're-education camps'. This is an intolerable violation of international law.

Thus far, New Zealand's main response has been the signing of an international statement rebuking Chinese treatment of the people of Xinjiang. When asked about this, you told the media New Zealand's reasoning: "Because we believe in human rights, we believe in freedom and we believe in the liberty of personal beliefs and the right to hold them." While this is a good first step, there appears to have been little follow-up. As I'm sure you are aware, New Zealand has a long, proud history of standing up to powers greater than itself; New Zealand pushed back against nuclear tests in the Pacific and denied entry to the USS Buchanan in 1985, and in 2003, you yourself advocated against military involvement in Iraq without the approval of the United Nations. The ongoing persecution of minority groups in Xinjiang is another one of these moments.

New Zealand must stand up on the international stage and demonstrate true commitment to human rights. As Minister of Foreign Affairs, you have the power to stand up for the rights of the Uighur people and condemn the actions of the Chinese government.

Sincerely,

Tom Wilkinson
Advocate, the Organization for World Peace



Jonathon Arrell
Vice President, the Organization for World Peace